

Kidnapers Sent Germany Reply

New York Times News Service

BONN — The government, in a cryptic announcement on television late last night, said it had forwarded "the answers of the prisoners" to a Geneva lawyer for relaying to the kidnapers of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, a top industrialist.

The prisoners to whom the message referred were thought to be the 11 ultraleftists whose release from jail the terrorists have demanded in exchange for Schleyer's life.

There was no immediate indication as to what the prisoners had been asked. One possible explanation was that the authorities had polled them about the country where they wanted to be flown if they were set free.

The terrorists who kidnaped Schleyer, president of the West German Employers' and Industry Federations, eight days ago requested that a long-distance aircraft be placed at the disposal of the 11 imprisoned radical extremists — six men and five women — for flying to a country of their choice.

Libya and South Yemen were most often mentioned as possible havens for the 11 terrorists.

The government said last night that Denis Payot, the Swiss lawyer who acts as a middleman, may verify the prisoners' replies before forwarding them to the terrorists.